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Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption

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Addendum

III. Prevention

1. At its 7th meeting, on 7 November 2017, the Conference considered agenda item 4, entitled "Prevention".

2. The President of the Conference and two Vice-Presidents of the Conference, Ms. Okeke and Mr. Zafar, chaired the discussion. In his introductory remarks, Mr. Zafar, recalled the resolutions dealing with preventive measures that had been adopted by the Conference at its sixth session, namely resolutions 6/5, 6/6, 6/7, 6/8, 6/9 and 6/10. He acknowledged the efforts of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption, which, in its meetings in 2016 and 2017, had addressed the following topics: the use of information and communications technologies for the implementation of the Convention; the protection of integrity in sport; education in schools and universities on anti-corruption efforts; and integrity in criminal justice institutions.

3. A representative of the Secretariat updated the Conference on progress made in the implementation of resolution 6/6, entitled "Follow-up to the Marrakech declaration on the prevention of corruption". She provided information on the technical assistance initiatives of UNODC at the national, regional and global levels to support States parties in the prevention of corruption, including support for the development of national anti-corruption strategies, capacity-building for anti-corruption bodies and other practitioners, targeted legislative assistance, support for the strengthening of integrity in the justice sector and the promotion of anti-corruption education. She announced the launch by UNODC of a new handbook on anti-corruption measures in prisons and highlighted the support given by the Office to civil society and efforts to raise public awareness of corruption and to promote the role of the private sector in preventing corruption.

4. The representative of the Secretariat also updated the Conference on the progress made in the implementation of resolution 6/9, entitled "Strengthening the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption in small island developing States". She underlined the importance of the participation of small island developing States in the Implementation Review Mechanism and the sharing of best practices in anti-corruption reform. She provided information on the technical

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assistance initiatives of UNODC, States parties and other donors to support small island developing States in the prevention of corruption.

5. Several speakers reported on their activities to prevent corruption, particularly the enactment, revision and updating of anti-corruption and anti-money-laundering legislation, including in relation to the protection of whistle-blowers and reporting persons, the liability of legal persons and the establishment of anti-corruption agencies. One speaker noted the possibility of using tax reforms to promote transparency.

6. Some speakers noted efforts to strengthen the integrity of the public sector through the training and education of public officials, the development and implementation of codes of ethics and the adoption and improvement of electronic asset declaration systems. Several speakers highlighted the need to facilitate the reporting of corruption cases by citizens and public officials.

7. Speakers highlighted initiatives to draft and implement comprehensive national anti-corruption strategies that included wide-ranging measures to prevent corruption. Some speakers also reported on corruption risk assessments conducted at different levels of government, as well as on efforts to measure the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures that had been adopted. One speaker noted the establishment of integrity assessments for both public officials and institutions.

8. One speaker reported on the establishment of an international partnership against corruption in sports, led by a group of international organizations, countries and the International Olympic Committee.

9. Some speakers reported on measures to promote integrity in the judiciary. One speaker underscored measures that had been adopted to safeguard judicial independence, in particular relating to the appointment of judges. Speakers also informed the Conference about the adoption of codes of ethics for court personnel, measures to improve court and case management procedures and internal control systems for the judiciary. One speaker referred to the drafting of transparency principles for the judiciary to assist in the implementation of article 11 of the Convention.

10. Several speakers underscored the role of the private sector in preventing corruption and the need to promote coordinated action. One speaker reported on the adoption of codes of ethics for the private sector, while other speakers highlighted reforms undertaken to increase transparency in the private sector.

11. Several speakers described recent reforms to promote access to public information by the adoption of legislation to ensure freedom of information, the proactive disclosure of information through online transparency portals and the establishment of independent bodies to monitor, promote and facilitate access to information.

12. Many speakers emphasized the need for the inclusion of civil society organizations, academia, private sector, media and other stakeholders in the wide range of initiatives and mechanisms necessary for the implementation of chapter II of the Convention. Speakers noted the positive role of civil society organizations, as well as the opportunities for partnerships, in preventing corruption.

13. Several speakers emphasized the importance of education at all levels for the prevention of corruption and described efforts in their countries to integrate anti-corruption into the curricula of public and private schools and universities. Speakers informed the Conference about the creation of learning centres and open libraries to increase opportunities for anti-corruption learning and education. One speaker welcomed the Education for Justice initiative, established by UNODC. Many speakers reported on campaigns to raise awareness, especially through the use of social media, about anti-corruption efforts, in particular their potential to reach the general public.

14. Some speakers highlighted new uses of information and communications technologies, including social media and mobile telephone applications, to increase the participation of citizens, identify innovative solutions to prevent corruption and promote transparency and accountability, including in relation to overseeing the implementation of social policies and monitoring the quality of public services. In particular, some speakers reported on the adoption of electronic payment systems as a means of preventing funds from being diverted by public officials and the establishment of digital asset disclosure and declaration systems, as well as electronic management and compliance systems for the public sector.

15. Speakers underscored the role and importance of the Implementation Review Mechanism in assisting States parties in identifying recommendations on and good practices in the implementation of chapter II of the Convention. A number of speakers requested technical assistance in strengthening measures to prevent corruption, including in relation to training and the adoption of national anti-corruption strategies. Many speakers welcomed the technical assistance being provided by UNODC and described projects and activities being implemented with its support.

16. A representative of the European Public Law Organization informed the Conference about multidisciplinary educational programmes of that organization for graduates and practitioners, highlighting the need to ensure transparency and good governance.

17. A representative of the UNCAC Coalition called upon States parties to strengthen mechanisms to promote access to public information, procurement and budgetary procedures, asset declarations and the participation of civil society. A representative of the Observatory for the Fight against Corruption and Economic Embezzlement informed the Conference about the activities of the Observatory to raise awareness about the Convention and called for improvements in providing access to information. A representative of the Institute for Global Financial Integrity addressed the issue of transparency of beneficial ownership of corporations and encouraged States parties to collect information on such ownership and to make it available to law enforcement agencies upon request.